

# WHEEL REPORT **SMD**

## SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION - NMRA

### SPECIAL ISSUE – SUMMER, 2009

#### MER CONVENTION NEWS

The convention is really coming together! The convention venue, the Plaza Hotel, is on the west side of Hagerstown, just off I-81 and easy to get to from all directions. You can call and make reservations now; ask for the Mid-Eastern Region, NMRA, rate. Basic registration is only \$35. For more information, please check the website: <http://mer.nmra.org/MERConv/MERConv.html>. If you have any questions call or email Clint Hyde ([chyde@cox.net](mailto:chyde@cox.net)) or Jane Clarke (301-610-2219, [jane.clarke@bioreliance.com](mailto:jane.clarke@bioreliance.com)).

There will be two full-day prototype tours. On Friday we will travel by bus for “A Day at Union Bridge.” This includes visits to the Maryland



Maryland Midland train enters Union Bridge (Don Florwick):

Midland Railroad, the Western Maryland Railway Historical Society Museum, and a Lehigh Cement



Engineer Tom Holder brings an EBT freight around the curve north of Runk Rd. (Pete Clarke):

Plant. On Saturday we will travel by carpool convoy to the East Broad Top Railroad in Orbisonia, PA. This fun- and fact-filled day includes a train ride, trolley ride, box lunch, and shop tour all narrated by Lee Rainey.

The list of clinics is constantly growing. Here is a sampling: Steve King on Time Table/Train Order operations (please register for both the clinic and the lab at one of three layouts), Lee Rainey on the EBT, Bob Johnson on rocks, Clint Hyde and Martin Brechbiel’s Build-It clinic, making “Super Trees,” the West Virginia Northern Railroad, modeling

**MER Convention News, continued**

stone structures with Styrofoam, the Hagerstown and Frederick Railroad, modeling operations on the EBT, and many other topics on other modeling techniques and railroads. The TT/TO and Build-It clinics are extra fare.

Operations call boards will be held at the following local layouts: Jeff Grove's Pine Valley Timber Co. (with extensive generic/freelanced locale Western Maryland Ry. trackage), Dick McEvoy's Barneytown and Scupperville (northern N.J. area), Paul Rausch's Ohio Northern, Mike Shockey's Great Northern (Pacific Northwest), and Brian Wolfe's Western Maryland Railway - Blue Ridge Division (Baltimore to Hagerstown through Pennsylvania). See the registration form for dates and times. The fee for each session is only \$5.

A new narrow gauge modular layout, James River Division On30 Modular Group, will be shown to MER for the first time ever. The Saturday evening banquet will culminate in a keynote presentation by Linn Moedinger of the Strasburg RR. Of course there will be a raffle, white elephant table, auction, and model contest.

Our division has a great opportunity to shine during this convention. As we get closer to convention time, I'll be asking for help ranging from guest greeting to crowd control (hopefully!) You can let me (Jane) know now if you will be available or just volunteer to help out while you're there.

**CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR OPEN HOUSES, CLINICS**

Read the Division Superintendent's message. Pete says it all. What Pete doesn't say is the main beneficiary when you volunteer is yourself. When you host a meeting, ideas come walking in the door. When you prepare a clinic, you acquire more than a passing knowledge of the subject.

**FROM THE DESK OF THE DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT:**

From reading Model Railroader and from the SMD's historic lack of meetings in the summer, it's always been my impression that people don't model railroad in the summer. I've never understood that. Personally, I hate the heat and humidity, so I tend to spend more time in the basement in the summer than any other time of year. Summer is "high season" for working on my model railroad. This year I hope to make some real progress on the iron furnace and upgrade some other parts of our layout. On behalf of all the members of SMD, I'd like to thank the following members who opened their homes and hosted our meetings in this past year. Jeff Grove (September and December), Bob Van Zant (October, on a moments notice), Bob Proctor (November), Don Florwick (January), Bob Johnson (February), Richard Lind (March), Richard Benjamin (April), and Paul Rausch (May). I'd also like to thank those who took the time to prepare and present topics to the members at our meetings in this past year. Clinics were given by; Richard Lind (Three - Stone structures, the West Virginia Northern RR, making Super Trees), Jeff Grove (structures), Bob Johnson (Freelance design from a prototype), Richard Benjamin (Mushroom layout design), and you sat through my EBT talk and looked at photographs from the winter trip Jane and I took in February on the Durango & Silverton.

I'd like to remind you that historically the SMD does not have meetings in June, July, or August. While it's high season for modeling, it's also vacation time.

Our next years schedule is beginning to take shape. Here's a list of our scheduled meetings.  
September 13 - Dick McEvoy. No clinic scheduled  
October 11 - There will be no meeting. It's too close to the start of the convention.  
November 8 - Jay Beckham. Jay will talk about the South Shore line in Chicago.  
December 13 - Roy Hoffman. Roy will talk about the railroads around Philadelphia, PA.

**Division Superintendent message, continued**

January 10 –  
February 14 –  
March 14 –  
April 11 – Paul Rausch. No clinic scheduled  
May 16 – Stan Oaks. Meeting moved to avoid Mothers Day. No clinic scheduled.

Please note that we have no meetings currently scheduled for January, February, or March. If you'd like the SMD to have a meeting those months, contact me (Pete) and offer to host. My impression this past year was that the meetings in PA were well attended. Come PA folks, here's the chance to host more. Un-hosted meetings, well, they can't really happen, can they? Also note that we have only 2 clinics scheduled. I think everyone enjoys these, I've never heard anyone ask that they stop. But they don't come from out of thin air. Don't be a slacker; offer to give one. Ways to contact me (Pete) are listed in this Wheel Report.

We (SMD) will be hosting the MER convention in October. I know that a lot of us will be working to make that a success. Some are on the committee, some are giving clinics, some are hosting operating sessions, some are hosting open houses, and there are many other jobs. As the Superintendent of SMD, I'd like to see one more thing get done. I'd really like it if we made an attempt to explain to the convention attendees what a railroad town Hagerstown is. This could be as simple as a series of hand drawn posters that show all the different railroads that passed through Hagerstown. Perhaps there could be one poster for each significant railroad time frame. You may have a better idea of how to execute it. I don't know enough about Hagerstown to know what those time frames are, but they might be; the early days, the 1880's, the early 1900's, and 1970 to present. Without this, what will the attendees have learned about the host city? If you agree with this concept (that is, let's show the convention attendees about the railroads of Hagerstown) and would like to work on this, contact me. I can't do it alone. Pete

**SOUTH MOUNTAIN DIVISION ELECTIONS**

Elections were held at our May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Given that there were no offices with more than one nomination, the results should not surprise you. The following were re-elected;  
Superintendent – Pete Clarke  
Assistant Superintendent – Don Florwick  
Clerk – Richard Lind  
Paymaster – Ray Price

These will be the SMD officers for the 2009-2010 year.

**SMD MEMBERSHIP PROFILE**

This membership profile is based on the MER membership abstract, which comes out monthly. I'm using November 2008's abstract, since it's the most recent I have. According to it we had 81 members on that date, 34.6% of which are life members. Our youngest member is 29 and our oldest 89. MER had birth dates for 83% of our members, and of that 83%, the average age is 65.6 years. Most of us are between 56 and 70 years of age.

Forty-three of the 81 on MER's list live in Frederick County MD, 13 in Washington County MD, 9 in Franklin County PA, 6 in Jefferson County WV, 4 in Berkeley County WV, and one each in Allegany County MD, Garrett County MD, Bedford County PA, and Somerset County PA.

**EBT'S NEW MANAGEMENT**

On May 8<sup>th</sup> it was announced that a non-profit group, "East Broad Top Railroad Preservation Association" signed an agreement to operate the EBT railroad for the next 3 years. Also part of the agreement is that the non-profit has the right to purchase the EBT outright during that period. Changes are expected to be apparent immediately starting with opening day, June 6<sup>th</sup>. The gift shop

will carry more items and credit cards will be accepted for both gift items and train tickets. The new group has high hopes and talked of bringing loco 14 back into service and extending the line to Mount Union.



The EBT is a one of a kind gem. It's local. Go take a ride this summer.

From Hagerstown the EBT is a pleasant country drive that should take just over one hour.

Directions are:

1. From I 81, take Exit 7 B, route 58 West toward Cearfoss (becomes 416 in PA, total ~ you'll be on 58/416 for about 13 miles)
2. At the dead end, take a left turn on to PA 16 (you'll be on Route 16 for about 13 miles)
3. In McConnellsburg, at the 2nd light, turn right on to PA 522 (you'll be on 522 for about 27 miles)
4. In Orbisonia, at the only light, turn left on to Meadow St. EBT is less than a mile.

For more information check the EBT website, which is [WWW.EBTRR.COM](http://WWW.EBTRR.COM)

Also, someone has scanned and posted some of the local newspaper stories:

From May 8<sup>th</sup> -

<http://www.railfanusa.com/pics/ebay/a1.jpg> and <http://www.railfanusa.com/pics/ebay/a2.jpg>

From May 9<sup>th</sup> -

<http://www.railfanusa.com/pics/ebay/b1.jpg> and <http://www.railfanusa.com/pics/ebay/b2.jpg>

## MER's NEW CHESAPEAKE DIVISION

The inactive Mount Claire Division has been reactivated as the Chesapeake Division. Last fall, the already huge Susquehanna Division made a move to take over what remained of the territory of the inactive Mount Claire Division. The response of the NMRA members in that area was to reactivate their Division and change its name. On May 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM they held their first Division Meeting at the Towson Public Library.

The Chesapeake Division's territory consists of Baltimore, Harford, Carroll, Cecil, Anne Arundel, and Queen Anne's Counties and Baltimore City in the state of Maryland. For more information, contact Kurt Thompson at (410) 544-7247 or [kurtrain@verizon.net](mailto:kurtrain@verizon.net).

## SEND YOUR CORRECT EMAIL ADDRESS TO MER

Get the free benefit of *The Local*.

The NMRA Mid-Eastern Region (MER) doesn't have email addresses for all of our members. I could share ten email addresses with MER, but I won't do it without permission. It's up to us all to keep our mailing addresses and email addresses up-to-date with NMRA, MER as well as with SMD to receive the full benefit of NMRA membership.

One of the great benefits from MER is *The Local*. *The Local* costs \$6.00 per year for a paper copy and is absolutely free by email. Sometimes *The Local* is filled with MER business, but frequently there are useful articles. My personal favorite is a series by Mike White, titled "On The Road", which was about creating accurate period highway signage, using resources on the Internet.

So please keep in touch. Send address and email changes to Fred Miller, the MER Business Manager at [merbusmgr@aol.com](mailto:merbusmgr@aol.com).

## MODELING NOTES

I'd like to show you a quick and easy solution I came up with for modeling a row of coke ovens. Coking is a process in which the coal is burned with a limited supply of air. This burns off that portion with a lower BTU (British thermal unit) content. The remaining product, "coke" has a higher BTU rating than pure coal. For more information on beehive coke ovens, you can look at this website, <http://patheoldminer.rootsweb.ancestry.com/coke2.html>

Years ago I purchased and put on the layout a plaster cast of some beehive ovens. I now want a long row of these. But the company that made it is no longer in business and I couldn't find anyone else who makes such a thing. So I decided to make my own. I've never done any mold making or casting. I'm sure it could be done that way, but didn't think I should go that route. But I have cut and glued styrene. I found a sheet of styrene that was embossed with a brick pattern. I laminated a piece of the brick pattern to a piece of plain styrene to form the vertical wall. Then I studied the casting. I noted that it had about a one-inch square section of bricks that represented the area around the oven opening. I cut a one-inch square section from the remaining brick sheet. Not having a compass to make a nice arched opening, I started searching for something round that was the right size. Jane found a small bottle that proved to be just right. Using it, I traced the top arch. I added the side and bottom lines and then cut out the opening. I then used this as the master and cut out 10 more. I measured the height of an EBT hopper car and marked where this was on the vertical wall. The brick pattern made it easy to then glue on my oven fronts all at the same level. I painted them a nice brick color and then on the recessed bricks that represent the firebricks used to close the opening, I scrapped off most of the red color. The white styrene and the remains of the red paint left them looking like the off white color of the firebricks that would be used to line and close off the coke ovens! In the attached picture you can see the wall, the ovens, the mules pulling the "larry

cars" used to dump coal in the top opening to "charge" the ovens, and I've started work on the wharf (the flat area where the coke would be raked out of the ovens) and the lowered track with a hopper car of coke to be sent to the stock house.



Although the picture shows my scene is far from completed, I think that comparing it to the drawings in the website will show that it's not a bad representation. Good enough for a narrow gauge guy for now anyway.

The second part of this column is not an answer, it's a question.

On our EBT, we have one length of track (the Timber Transfer track, see photo) that has multiple "spots" on it. It has the transfer shed where L.C.L. was moved from standard gauge box cars to narrow gauge EBT box cars. It also has the Timber Transfer where lumber was picked up by an overhead crane and moved from narrow gauge cars to standard gauge cars. It also has an area where lumber and other miscellaneous items were transferred (by hand, or perhaps by back would be the better way to describe it) between standard and narrow gauge cars. Finally, there's a spot where pig iron is transferred.

To me, knowing where any car destined for this track belongs is a no-brainer. Logs go to the Timber Transfer, pig iron goes to the spot where



some pigs are stacked, flat cars go to the lumber/pipe pile, box cars to the transfer shed. But I noticed after an operating session that cars were not left in those places. Again, note the photo.

So the question is, how do you let guest operators know where each spot is?

I believe I read an article, or maybe it's on Don Florwick's layout, where there's a long warehouse with many doors. But each door has a number, so it's pretty easy to define what each "spot" is. I also want to point out that the switching list that I give each operator is a pretty full page. In some cases, I have very little room to add anything, and we are all getting blind, so I don't want to reduce the font size. I could add a track plan to the fascia, but the aisle is narrow, I'm not sure anyone would be able to, or bother to, read it.

I bet lots of others have a place where you have multiple spots on one siding. So, what suggestions do you have to help me make it clear where each car goes?

As an aside, I've now decided that having multiple spots on single siding is a royal pain! Every time I look at track plans in model railroader it's one of the things I check to see if I think the plan is really any good or not. Send me your suggestions. Happy modeling this summer! Send Richard Lind some pictures; we'd like to see what you worked on this summer.

## EDITOR'S SCRIBBLINGS

So. Why the special issue? Don't we always have three issues a year? Well yes, but I felt a need to announce SMD election results before August and Pete Clarke asked if we could have a summer issue this year because of the upcoming convention. I was prepared, but before I got much written, Pete and Jane emailed me most of the content I needed. What a blessing. Just as Pete recognized those who hosted meetings and presented clinics, we must recognize Pete and Jane's contributions to the *Wheel Report*. Pete and Jane have set the tenor or the *Wheel Report*. Are you tired of hearing about the EBT? You can change that very quickly by submitting an article. The *Wheel Report* isn't just the Super's. It belongs to us all and should reflect our collective and passionate interests.

## EVENTS AND TRAIN SHOWS

June 6-7. Opening weekend. East Broad Top Railroad, Rockhill Furnace (Orbisonia) PA.

June 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM. Wine and Cheese Train. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA. See [www.strasburgrailroad.com/wine-and-cheese.php](http://www.strasburgrailroad.com/wine-and-cheese.php) for Wine and Cheese Train schedules through November

June 13-21. Day Out With Thomas. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA

June 18-20. 2009 O Scale National Convention, Towson University Student Union, 8000 York Road, Towson MD. See [info@oscaleeast.com](mailto:info@oscaleeast.com)

June 27-28. Great Scale Model Train Show, Maryland State Fair Grounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium MD 21093 [www.gsmts.com](http://www.gsmts.com)

June 28<sup>th</sup>, 3 PM. A Victorian Tea. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg, PA. Reserve now at [www.strasburgrailroad.com/special-events.php](http://www.strasburgrailroad.com/special-events.php)

July 5-11. National Model Railroad Association Hartford National Convention, Connecticut Convention Center, Harford CT.

July 10-12. National Train Show, Hartford CT

July 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM. Wine Tasting. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA.

July 26<sup>th</sup>. 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Train and Toy Show by the Cumberland Valley Model RR Club, Scotland Community Center, Main Street, Scotland PA. [www.cvmrrc.com/events.htm](http://www.cvmrrc.com/events.htm)

August 1-2. Greenburg's Train Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds, 2200 York Road, Timonium MD. See [GreenbergShows.com](http://GreenbergShows.com)

August 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM. Wine Tasting. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA.

August 22-23. Greenburg's Train Show, Dulles Expo Center, 4368 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly, Southeast, VA 20153

Sept. 12-20. Day Out With Thomas. Strasburg Railroad, East Strasburg PA

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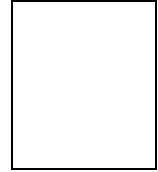
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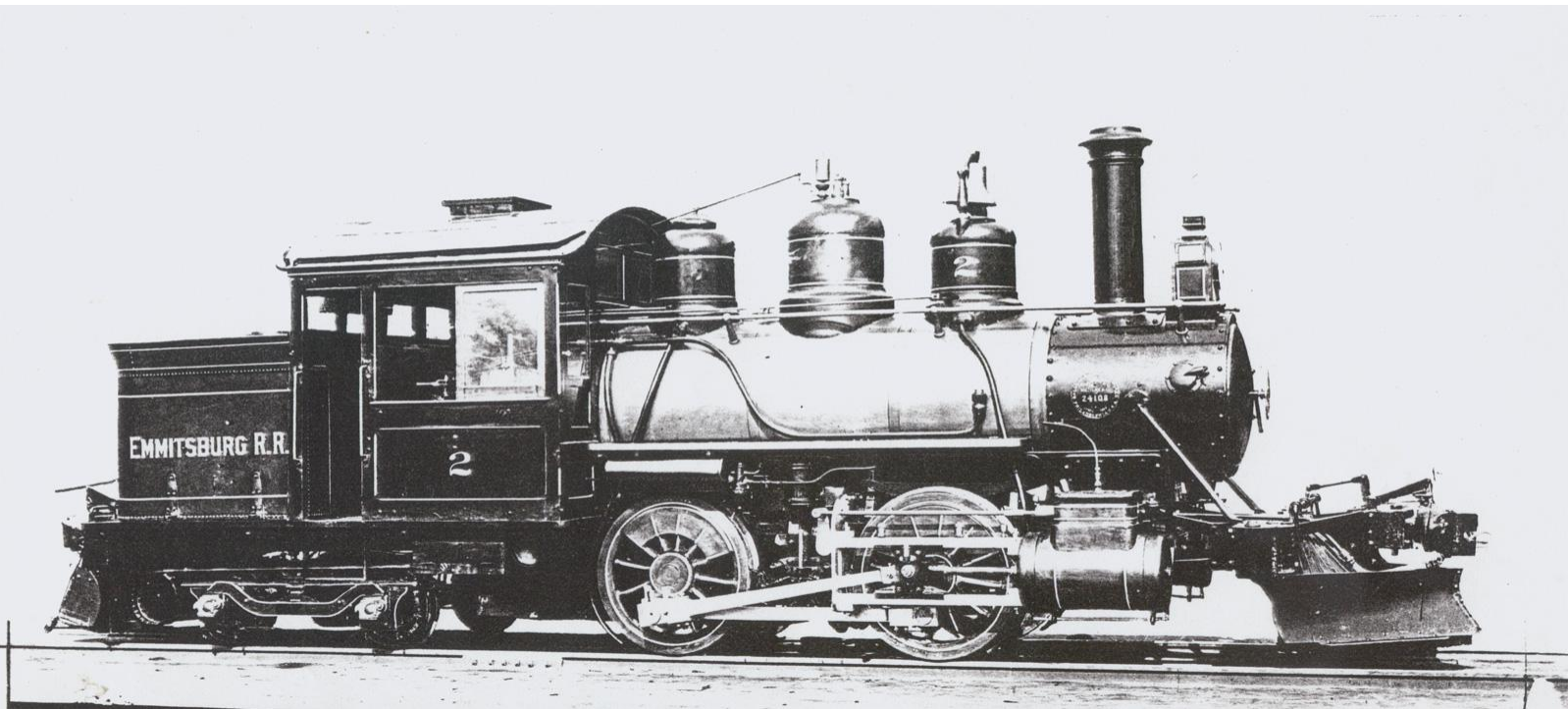
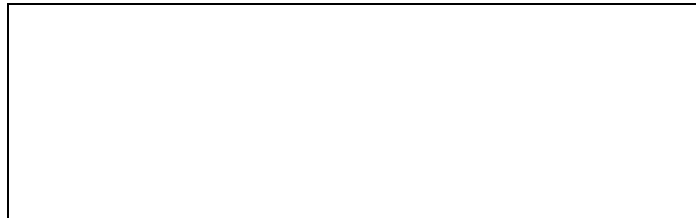
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